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AUTHOR	Gilbert, Katherine J.
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ABSTRACT

The alternate program at McBride School was an organizational and curricular modification that offered optional activities, community recreation, semestering of some subjects, and unstructured time. It involved four intermediate grade classes. Questionnaires were distributed to students who were enrolled in the alternate program and to their parents. In addition, the School Sentiment Index (Intermediate Level) was administered to students in both the alternate and regular programs. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests were given to alternate program classes in Grades 4, 5, and 7 in the early Fall of 1971 and again in the Spring of 1972. Results of the evaluation showed that there was general support for the alternate program from the parents and from students enrolled in it. The results of the standardized tests indicated that in reading skills, the Grade 4 and Grade 7 students both made substantial gains. The Grade 5 students sustained a loss; and the Grade 6 arithmetic scores were average or above in comparison with other Vancouver students. There were essentially no differences in attitudes towards school between students in the alternate program and those in the regular program. The only significant difference was in respect to "School Social Structure and Climate," with the alternate program students showing more positive feelings. There was some friction and jealcusy among students because of the alternate program, and a communication problem existed between members of the staff and parents regarding the alternate program. (For related documents, see TM 002 488, 489.) (DE)

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RESEARCH REPORT

Evaluation of the Alternate Program at McBride School, 1971-72

July, 1972

Katherine J. Gilbert

Research Report 72-19

Department of Planning and Evaluation
Board of School Trustees
1595 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver 9, B. C.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	i
Introduction	1
Description of the Program	1
Summary of Questionnaire Returns	3
Results of the School Sentiment Index	5
Standardized Test Results	7
General Observations	9
Conclusions	10
Case Study	11
Appendix A - Summary of Returns to the Questionnaire to Students	13
Appendix B - Summary of Returns to the Questionnaire to Parents	19

EVALUATION OF THE ALTERNATE PROGRAM AT MCBRIDE SCHOOL 1971-72

Abstract

The alternate program at McBride School was an organizational and curricular modification that offered optional activities, community recreation, semestering of some subjects and unstructured time. It involved four intermediate grade classes.

There was general support for the alternate program from the parents and from students enrolled in it. The parents and teachers both expressed concern about the friction between students on the alternate program and students on the regular program. Parents also mentioned the higher cost to them for students on the alternate program.

Students found the best aspects of the program to be the options period and community recreation. The thing they liked least was having recess at a different time than the rest of the school.

The parents thought that the variety provided by the alternate program was its main strength. There was no consensus of opinion as to the weaknesses of the program.

Teachers mentioned the flexibility of the program as a strength, i.e. being able to change the schedule as needed to fit the class and take advantage of learning situations that developed.

The results of the standardized tests indicated that in reading skills, the Grade 4 and Grade 7 students both made substantial gains. The students in Grade 5 did not make significant gains and, in fact, sustained a loss. The Grade 6 arithmetic scores were average or above in comparison with other Vancouver students, with "Concepts" being their strength.

There were essentially no differences in attitudes towards school between students on the alternate program and those on the regular program. The only instance in which the difference was significant was in respect to "School Social Structure and Climate" where the alternate program students had more positive feelings than the others.

Students on the alternate program were given many more opportunities to make decisions and to accept responsibility. Their studies were primarily individualized, but they also spent a relatively high proportion of their time working on projects in pairs or in small groups.

Having the alternate program tended to split McBride School. Students enrolled in it were segregated from other students and were considered by other students to be an elite group. There existed a ~~common~~ communication problem between members of the staff regarding the alternate program and parents, especially those with children on both programs, noticed friction and jealousy in their children. Steps have been considered to improve these conditions for next year.

AN EVALUATION OF THE ALTERNATE PROGRAM AT MCBRIDE SCHOOL 1971-72

Introduction

In keeping with Vancouver School Board policy, an alternate program was developed by the staff and introduced at McBride School in September 1971. The purpose of this report is to describe the program and to provide an evaluation of some of its aspects. A more thorough evaluation could not be done since the request for an evaluation did not reach the Department of Planning and Evaluation until February 1972.

Description of the Program

The alternate program for four intermediate grade classes was an organizational and curricular modification that offered optional activities, community recreation, semestering of some subjects and unstructured time.

This description is based on extensive observation of the program by the writer and conversations with staff members, students, and parents. The program was available to selected students from Grades 4-7 and while time was spent in all four classrooms, the majority of observation was done in the Grade 7 class.

The basic concepts of the alternate program, as it was called at McBride were conceived by the principal and developed by staff members during the 1970-71 school year. The staff outlined the objectives of the program and its basic organization and selected prospective students for the 1971-72 school year. The objectives, as provided by the staff, were:

1. To create an atmosphere in which each child would proceed at his own rate.
2. To provide the student with electives so that he could select subjects in which he had greater interest.
3. To enhance the social maturation of the student with particular emphasis on developing positive attitudes towards others and towards knowledge.
4. To personalize as many subject areas as possible.
5. To encourage the student to accept responsibility for his own actions.

A student was selected for the program through his teacher's belief that he would benefit from the freedom that was proposed for the alternate classrooms. The students chosen were usually the "good" students, i.e., students with relatively high letter grades and few behaviour problems, although some students with behaviour problems or low academic achievement were chosen, also.

The four alternate program classes (one in each of Grades 4-7) were organized according to the particular characteristics of the teacher and students. Each class, therefore, was different although they had several things in common which were unique to the alternate program.

These were the common features:

* a certain amount of unstructured time in the weekly schedule,
* an options period and community recreation each week,
* less time allotted for Physical Education, and,
* some semestered subjects in Grades 6 and 7.

The unstructured time was used by students to complete their work or to do something of their own choice, subject to teacher permission. Community recreation was a time in which students, and on some occasions their parents, made use of recreational facilities. The activities were usually bowling or swimming with some skating during the winter. The options period was one hour a week in which students took part in activities of their choice. The activities lasted about three months each and were supervised by teachers or volunteer assistants, sometimes parents. Some of the topics for activities offered during the year were: Cooking, Woodworking, Macramé, Basketball, Crafts and Chess. Facilities for the activities were often limited, but the students were enthusiastic nevertheless.

There was a different atmosphere in the alternate program classrooms than in other classrooms. The appearance was one of apparent disorganization, but closer examination revealed that careful consideration had been given to the placement of desks and other furniture in the room and maintenance of wall displays. Students were permitted to move around the room and to talk to other students most of the time. They were expected to do so quietly and without disturbing other people, however. Teachers had to remind some students to be considerate on occasion. The teacher's time was spent helping individual students or holding conferences to evaluate a student's progress. Students on the alternate program generally spent more time with their own teacher than other students in the school. This enabled them to change their schedule if more time was needed for a subject.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the alternate program classes and regular program classes was the emphasis on individualized instruction. Students worked independently in Reading, Mathematics, Spelling and Social Studies most of the time. Students in the Grade 4, 5, and 7 classes used an individualized reading program developed by the staff called "Reading on Your Own". Students in the Grade 6 class used a packaged Australian individualized mathematics program and all students used a mathematics workbook. Most students expressed enthusiasm for working on their own, saying that they liked working at their own pace.

As well as working alone a great deal of the time, students worked in pairs or in small groups on projects. The teachers said that they thought that learning to cooperate and work well with others was as important as the topic being studied. The students always chose their own topics, within the broad guidelines established by the teachers. Effort was made to expose the students to a variety of activities in which they had to express their ideas verbally in discussion groups, in oral reports, in conferences with the teacher, and in student-led class discussions.

Students in the Grade 7 class were encouraged to help younger students. One group of boys was in charge of planning and supervising the Physical Education class for a Grade 2 class. Other students led discussion groups for Grade 5 students when they were studying a novel, and still others gave individual help in arithmetic for Grade 4 students.

Summary of Questionnaire Returns

Questionnaires were distributed to students enrolled in the alternate program and their parents to document their opinions. Every third student on the alternate program class lists was asked by his teacher to complete a questionnaire. Questionnaires to parents were sent home with the students along with an announcement of a Parents' Meeting at the school. Every parent with a child on the program was sent a questionnaire. All parents who attended the parents' meeting were asked to complete a questionnaire at the meeting if they had not already done so.

Student Responses (See Appendix A)

Students enrolled in the alternate program indicated that the thing they liked best about the program was having community recreation. This was followed, in order, by having an options period and not having the desks in rows. They said that the thing they liked least of all about the program was having a different recess time. Several students indicated that there was nothing that they disliked about the alternate program.

Students said that they worked mostly on their own in Reading, Socials, Mathematics, and Spelling. They felt that working at their own rate was the best part of working alone and the number of distractions was the worst. Most of the students (81%) thought that they learned more by working on their own.

The students that were sampled had participated in all of the optional activities. A majority of the students felt that the choice of options had been sufficiently broad and all but one thought that they had learned valuable things from them. They suggested, as a means of improving the "options" program:

- allowing more time for the options
- providing more instructors for better supervision and more personal attention
- providing better equipment and materials

All but one of the students indicated that they had participated in community recreation activities during the year, usually bowling, swimming, or skating. The opinions as to whether or not there should have been more activities were divided:

- 62% thought "yes" and 38% thought "no". Most students thought that there was no need to have community recreation more than once per week. The activities they suggested for inclusion as a part of community recreation were more field trips, golf, roller skating, and trips to places of interest in Vancouver such as Stanley Park and MacMillan Planetarium.

Students made many specific suggestions for improving the alternate program (see Appendix A). These were grouped into four main categories.

1. General changes in the operation and organization of the alternate program.
2. Changes in the community recreation and options class arrangement.
3. Suggestions concerning teachers.
4. Suggestions regarding classroom organization.

Parent Responses (See Appendix B)

Questionnaires were received from 72 parents, 71 of whom had at least one child in the alternate program. These returns represented parents of 80 children on the program (56%) and 47 children on the regular program.

Most of the parents (93%) approved of using community facilities during school hours. They commented that "these activities supplement the children's education" and that "these activities make better use of the facilities available". The parents felt that the activities that had taken place away from the school were well-organized and well-supervised. Most of the parents offered no suggestions for improving the community's involvement with McBride School, but some did mention that more parents and retired people should be encouraged to participate.

Over one-half of the respondents (55%) had noticed attitude changes in their children since school started. The form of these changes was given most often as "more enthusiastic and interested in school". The attitude changes were often noticed "immediately after school started". Parents usually attributed the changes to "the variety and practicality of the options".

Most of the parents said that they had been asked to participate in school activities but most said that they had not done so.

Nearly all of the parents (91%) felt that their child or children had benefitted from the alternate program, and 93% wanted their children to remain on the alternate program.

The aspect of the program that was mentioned most frequently as a strength was the variety of the program. Also mentioned by a few parents as a strength was "the program teaches responsibility and initiative to the students".

The aspects given as weaknesses were quite varied and no single item could be identified as the major weakness of the program. The areas mentioned were:

1. Dissatisfaction with the operation of the alternate program classes, e.g.,"there was too little emphasis on mathematics".
2. Concern for the operation of the program in general, e.g., "there was too little help and equipment".
3. Concern about the friction between regular and alternate program students.
4. Dissatisfaction with the semester system used for some subjects.

The improvements suggested by the parents were also varied. They suggested that the program could be improved by "upgrading the facilities", "involving more students" and "sponsoring more field trips".

Results of the School Sentiment Index

There was concern on the part of staff members and parents that students on the regular program were jealous of students on the alternate program or felt some animosity towards them. In an attempt to pinpoint differences in their attitudes, the School Sentiment Index (Intermediate Level) was administered in May, 1972 to a sample of 84 students (19% sample). The means are reported in Table I.

TABLE I: MEAN VALUES BY CATEGORY ON THE SCHOOL SENTIMENT INDEX AT MCBRIDE SCHOOL

Grade	Sample Size	Teacher-- Mode of Instruction	Teacher-- Authority and Control	Teacher-- Interpersonal Relationships	Teacher-- Total	Learning	Peer	School Social Structure & Climate	General	Total
4	19	9.2	9.6	5.4	24.2	3.7	6.7	9.7	6.6	50.8
5	16	8.8	8.8	5.6	23.2	3.2	6.0	8.8	5.2	46.5
6	23	8.8	9.6	5.5	23.9	3.0	6.9	10.2	6.5	50.5
7	26	9.0	9.4	5.0	23.4	2.7	7.8	9.7	4.9	48.6
Program										
Regular	54	8.9	9.0	5.1	23.1	3.1	7.1	9.1	5.3	47.7
Alternate	30	9.0	10.0	5.7	24.7	3.1	6.8	10.7	6.7	52.0
Total	84	8.9	9.4	5.3	23.7	3.1	7.0	9.7	5.8	49.2
Possible Score		13	13	8	34	6	10	16	9	75

From these results it is seen that in all but one category, the means for the alternate program students were as high or higher than those for the regular program students. Only in the category for "Peer" did the regular program students have a higher average score.

Analyses of variance were carried out for all categories taking into account the variation due to different teachers in the regular program and the alternate program. The results are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE RESULTS OF THE SCHOOL SENTIMENT INDEX

Category	Calculated F-Statistic	Significance of the differences between programs
Teacher--Mode of Instruction	0.01	Not significant
Authority & Control	1.24	Not significant
Interpersonal Relationships	1.77	Not significant
Total	0.73	Not significant
Learning	0.05	Not significant
Peers	0.33	Not significant
School Social Structure & Climate	3.80	Significant at 0.10 level
General	2.92	Not significant
Total	1.55	Not significant

In only one case, "School Social Structure and Climate", was there a statistically significant[1] difference between students in the two programs, indicating that alternate program students have more positive feeling than regular program students.[2]

Standardized Test Results

Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests were given to the alternate program classes in Grades 4, 5, and 7 in the early fall of 1971 and again in the spring of 1972. A brief summary of the test scores is given below.

TABLE III: SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR THE GATES-MACGINITIE READING TESTS, MCBRIDE SCHOOL

	Percentile Rank of the Mean for		
	Speed & Accuracy	Vocabulary	Comprehension
Grade 4			
Pre-test (Form D1M)	62	71	58
Post-test (Form D2M)	85	72	73
Grade 5			
Pre-test (Form D2)	43	57	62
Post-test (Form D3M)	35	64	67
Grade 7			
Pre-test (Form E3M)	84	63	67
Post-test (Form E1M)	91	76	84

For each class and subtest a test of statistical significance (a paired t-test) was completed on the differences between pre-test standard scores and post-test standard scores to identify any significant gains or losses that had been made. The results are presented in Table IV.

For the Grade 4 alternate program class, significant gains were made on the Speed and Accuracy and Comprehension subtests. For the Grade 5 class, none of the changes were significant. For the Grade 7 class, significant gains were made on all subtests.

[1] significant at the 0.10 level of confidence.

[2] There was significant variation among classes within each program for almost every category. This suggests that the variation among students could be explained more by the differences in classes than by different programs.

TABLE IV: STATISTICS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE QUESTION: "WAS A SIGNIFICANT GAIN MADE ON THE GATES-MACGINITIE READING TEST DURING THE 1971-72 SCHOOL YEAR?".

Subtest	GRADE		
	4	5	7
Speed and Accuracy Number Attempted			
N	Scores	Scores	33
Mean difference	Not	Not	2.6
Standard deviation	Recorded	Recorded	4.68
t-statistic			3.12**
Speed and Accuracy Number Correct			
N	30	32	33
Mean difference	7.4	- 2.12	3.4
Standard deviation	8.19	6.88	8.00
t-statistic	4.97***	- 1.75	2.46*
Vocabulary			
N	31	32	33
Mean difference	0.23	1.88	3.7
Standard deviation	6.22	5.62	6.31
t-statistic	0.22	1.89	3.34**
Comprehension			
N	31	32	33
Mean difference	4.0	1.4	4.7
Standard deviation	4.34	6.39	5.28
t-statistic	5.14***	1.24	5.15***

Legend:
* Gain is significant at the α = 0.02 level
** Gain is significant at the α = 0.01 level
*** Gain is significant at the α = 0.001 level

The alternate program class of Grade 6 students took the Vancouver Survey Test in Mathematics (Form 69) in June 1972 as did all Grade 6 students in Vancouver schools. A summary of the class results appears below:

TABLE V: SUMMARY OF TEST RESULTS FOR GRADE 6 ALTERNATE PROGRAM STUDENTS ON THE VANCOUVER SURVEY TEST IN MATHEMATICS (FORM 69)

Subtest	Possible Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Percentile* of the Mean Score
Computation	36	22.4	6.11	57
Concepts	24	16.1	3.78	75
Problems	12	8.4	1.88	65
Total		46.9	10.60	65

*Percentile ranks were obtained from Research Report 72-11 of the Vancouver School Board.

These results indicate that the class in general received average scores on the "Computation" subtest, above average scores on the "Problems" subtest and the total test, and very good scores on the "Concepts" subtest.

General Observations

The things mentioned in this section are opinions formed through the observation period at McBride and conversations with the people involved.

By selecting the students that they did for the alternate program, the teachers insured the success of the program for the first year. The high proportion of "good" students in these four classes made unreasonable any comparison with other classes. In the selection of students for the alternate program for 1972-73, the teachers agreed that students who would likely be successful in any program should not be chosen. Teachers on the alternate program this year removed for a variety of reasons a substantial number of students (in one case, over one-half of the class) from the alternate program for next year.

Even though the facilities for some of the options classes, especially for cooking, sewing and woodworking, were limited, they were used a maximum of four hours per week. It would seem that these facilities should be available to other groups or classes when not being used by students on the alternate program. Also, since the best aspects of the alternate program were, according to students, having an options period and community recreation, at least some of the friction between regular program and

alternate program students could be reduced by incorporating similar activities into the regular program. Teachers discussed the desirability of doing this at their planning session in June 1972.

Some teachers at McBride School who teach mainly regular program classes but who have contact with alternate program students said that they had noticed no real improvements in the students' behaviour, methods of studying, or achievement. Most of them thought that the alternate program had had little effect on the students. One teacher said that the communication between regular program and alternate program teachers was very poor.

Conclusions

There was general support for the alternate program from the parents and from students enrolled in it. The parents and teachers both expressed concern about the friction between students on the alternate program and students on the regular program. Parents also mentioned the higher cost to them for students on the alternate program.

Students found the best aspects of the program to be the options period and community recreation. The thing they liked least was having recess at a different time than the rest of the school.

The parents thought that the variety provided by the alternate program was its main strength. There was no consensus of opinion as to the weaknesses of the program.

Teachers mentioned the flexibility of the program as a strength, i.e., being able to change the schedule as needed to fit the class and take advantage of learning situations that developed.

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Students on the alternate program were given many more opportunities to make decisions and to accept responsibility. Their studies were primarily individualized, but they also spent a relatively high proportion of their time working on projects in pairs or in small groups.

Having the alternate program tended to split McBride School. Students enrolled in it were segregated from other students and were considered by other students to be an elite group. There existed a communication problem between members of the staff regarding the alternate program and parents, especially those with children on both programs, noticed friction and jealousy in their children. Steps have been considered to improve these conditions for next year.

Case Study

In an attempt to illustrate the types of changes that were noticed by the teachers of the alternate program classes, a case study of one of the students has been provided by his teacher.

Personal Data

Age: 13 years
Sex: Male
Physical condition: Good physical development, no disabilities. Average height and slender build. Pale complexion, often tired, diet inadequate.

Family Data

Siblings: There is one older sister, married and living in another city.
Family occupations:
Father : Unemployed. He has a severe drinking problem.
Mother : Working as a dishwasher.
Subject: Delivered newspapers until January 1972 when he quit to participate in school sports.

The family has experienced financial difficulties as well as emotional upheaval. The atmosphere has been one of hostility and lack of respect. The subject has received little guidance and no discipline from the home. The parents were recently separated and the boy lives with his mother.

Scholastic Data

The subject's scholastic record is one of a low achiever with little interest in school. He spent one year in a "slow learners" class, but he made no noticeable improvement. Upon entering Grade 7, his scores for "Vocabulary" and "Comprehension" on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test placed him at Grade 4 levels (grade scores of 4.1 and 4.8, respectively). He displayed no interest in school and, due to problems at home and weak grounding in arithmetic and reading fundamentals, he suffered frustration in school. His written work was completely illegible and unorganized.

Classroom Behaviour

The subject had a very low opinion of women which made it difficult to adjust to a female teacher. He was rebellious, insolent, and openly stated that he was trying to get expelled from the alternate program. After consultation with his mother, his counsellor, and the Principal, it was decided that to expel him would reinforce his poor attitudes. Therefore, he remained in the class.

During a two-week illness of the teacher, other students in the class convinced him that his attitudes were wrong. He wrote to the teacher and told her that he would "give school another chance".

Several objectives were defined to aid the subject:

1. to influence his attitude towards women so that some rapport with the teacher could develop.
2. to provide a program that would interest him and yet not exceed his limited ability.
3. to provide numerous experiences in inter-personal relations with his classmates.
4. to keep in close contact with his mother and offer support and guidelines for his home.
5. to improve his self-image.

His reading material was supplemented with books on sports, especially ice hockey and car racing. He later asked for additional help in Mathematics and other students offered their help. He had many ideas for the sports program and began helping with the Grade 2 Physical Education class.

He developed several surface friendships with other students and his self-image gradually improved. With success he began to attempt more difficult work. By the end of the school year he had developed an interest in reading. His test scores in June were improved: grade score of 5.2 for "Vocabulary" and 7.2 for "Comprehension".

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APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF RETURNS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS

TM 002 488

QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS ON THE ALTERNATE PROGRAM AT MCBRIDE SCHOOL

1. What grade are you in? _____ (Write in grade.)

Grade	4	5	6	7	Total
Number of Respondents	11	13	13	16	53
Enrolment	35	36	38	35	144
Percentage	31%	36%	34%	46%	37%

2. Are you a girl? 28 (53%) a boy? 25 (47%) (Put a check ✓ in one.)

3. What do you like most about being on the alternate program?

33 Can work on my own.

33 Can have unstructured time. Can do what I want at times.

39 Get to have an options period.

46 Get to have community recreation.

19 Have a different recess time.

27 Can spend more time with the same teacher.

31 Do more work on projects and use testbooks less often.

35 Desks don't always have to be in rows.

6 Other (please explain).

- Can get to know other students better.
- Can move about the room without permission.
- Can work with other students.

4. What do you like least about being on the alternate program?

18 Different recess time.

4 Too much work to do.

5 Spend too much time with one teacher.

8 Have to choose projects too often - I don't know what to choose.

4 Don't like the teacher.

4. (Continued)

10 Other (please explain).

- Classes aren't well supervised.
- Other students are jealous and you can't communicate with them.
- There is too much homework.

5. In what subjects do you work mostly on your own?

Math 25 Spelling 25 Socials 27

Reading 34 Science 17 Others 5

Music, Art, Typing

6. What do you like most about working on your own?

39 Can work at my own rate.

22 Can choose my own projects.

23 Can work on the subjects I want.

25 Can organize my own time.

2 Other (please explain).

- Can spend time with friends while working.
- Learn more

2 No Response

7. What do you like least about working on your own?

13 Not always able to find something to do.

8 Can't manage my time well enough.

0 Don't know what I am to do.

24 Too many distractions.

4 Other (please explain).

- I can't handle myself unless I'm interested in what I'm doing.
- I need more unstructured time.

12 No Response

8. Do you often have to wait when you need help from the teacher?

Yes 10 (19%) No 39 (73%) Sometimes 3 (6%) Both 1 (2%)

9. Do you think you learn more by working on your own?

Yes 43 (81%) No 8 (15%) Both 2 (4%)

10. Please check the activities you have taken (or are taking) during your options period. (Check as many as apply.)

	Sept. -Jan.	Jan. -March	April-June
Cooking	13	15	13
Sewing	2	6	4
Macramé	0	4	0
Chess	5	7	0
Ping pong	6	6	2
Needlework	7	6	2
Crafts	5	4	9
Woodworking	2	5	7
Model making	6	3	2
Typing	10	5	5
French	13	12	13
Drama	1	7	5
Other:			
Basketball	0	2	8
Soccer	1	0	0
Sports	1	1	2

11. Do you think there were enough choices of activities for the options period?
Yes 49 (92%) No 4 (8%)

12. Do you think you learned valuable things from your activities?

Yes 52 (98%) No 1 (2%)

13. What suggestions would you make to improve the options program?

- Allow more time for options. 8
- Have more instructors for better supervision and more personal attention. 8
- Provide better equipment and materials. 6
- Have more choices. 4
- Include more outdoor activities. 2

14. Have you participated in any community recreation activities during school hours? Yes 52 (98%) No 1 (2%)

Which activities? (Check those that apply.)

Bowling 51 Swimming 51 Skating 51

Others: Snow sports and games. 16 Baseball. 7
Tennis. 15 Basketball. 6
Field trips and tours. 10

15. Do you think there should be more community recreation activities?

Yes 33 (62%) No 20 (38%)

Should they be more often?

Yes 19 (36%) No 33 (62%) Possibly 1 (2%)

16. What activities do you think should be included as a part of community recreation?

- More field trips. 13
- Golf. 13
- Rollerskating. 9
- Trips to places of interest in Vancouver. 9
- Walks or hikes. 8
- Bicycling. 6

17. What suggestions do you have for improving the alternate program?

A. General changes in the operation and organization of the alternate program. 12

- Return to 40-minute periods.
- Have recess with the rest of the school.
- Have a longer recess.
- Expand the program to include more students.
- Need a bell to indicate when options period is over.
- Need more equipment.
- Have longer school hours.
- Remove students who make trouble.
- Make the library free for reference books.

B. Changes in the community recreation and options arrangements. 10

- Have a wider choice for options.
- Have more time for options and community recreation.
- Have more volunteers to help with options.
- Offer other languages.
- Improve the arrangements for drama, French and typing.
- Have more outdoor activities.

C. Suggestions concerning teachers. 10

- Should give more supervision.
- Should not show favouritism.
- Have more personal contact.
- Should have more teachers.

D. Suggestions regarding classroom organization. 8

- Would rather work on reading than Library Skills.
- Too much emphasis on language.
- Classroom is too noisy.
- Should work together in language.
- Should not have so much homework.
- Would like more unstructured time.
- Should have more than one music period per week.
- More silent reading without projects.

ED 074126

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF RETURNS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS

TM 002 489

QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS OF MCBRIDE SCHOOL STUDENTS

1. In what grades are your children enrolled this year?

Grade Level	Special Education	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total*	No Response
Number of Students	1	3	8	7	8	23	22	32	23	127	1

*The total is greater than 72 since there is often more than one child enrolled at McBride.

2. Are any of your children currently enrolled in the Alternate Program? If so, in which grades?

Yes 71 (99%) No 1 (1%)

Grade Level	4	5	6	7	Total
Number of Students	21	18	23	18	80
Enrolment	35	36	38	35	144
Percentage	60.0%	50.0%	60.5%	51.4%	55.6%

3. Do you approve or disapprove of students making use of the community as a resource for learning activities during school hours?

Approve 66 (92%) Disapprove 1 (1%) No opinion 4 (6%)

Mixed Feelings 1 (1%)

Comments:

- These activities supplement the children's education. 8
- These activities make better use of the facilities. 6
- It teaches youngsters how to enjoy recreational facilities. 4
- It helps young people become a part of the community. 4

4. Do you think that school activities that have taken place away from the school have been well organized and supervised?

Yes 68 (94%) No 2 (3%) No Response 2 (3%)

Comments:

- The supervision was adequate, satisfactory, as well arranged as possible. 9
- I wasn't there so I can't comment. 4

5. What suggestions do you have concerning community involvement with the school?

No Response 54 (75%)

Suggestions

- Encourage more parents and retired people to participate. 6
- A community centre closer to the neighbourhood would help considerably. 2
- No suggestions to make, the present system is fine. 10

If you have a child enrolled on the alternate program, please answer the remaining questions.

I. Have you noticed any changes in the attitude of your son/daughter towards school, teachers, himself, or other students, since school started in September?

Yes 39 (55%) No 28 (39%) No Response 4 (6%)

What form did these changes take?

- More enthusiastic and interested in school. 20
- Better able to get along with others, more cooperative. 4
- Better able to express ideas. 3
- Participates in school activities. 3

When did you notice the changes?

- Immediately after school started. 14
- December-January. 7
- Gradually or at no one time. 7

What do you think caused the changes?

- The options class provides practical experience and more variety. 12
- Students are given more freedom. 3

II. Have you been asked to participate in school activities such as Community Recreation and Options classes with the students?

Yes 48 (67%) No 19 (27%) No Response 4 (6%)

Have you taken part in any of these activities?

Yes 16 (23%) No 50 (70%) No Response 5 (7%)

II. (Continued)

Which activities? Please list them.

- Cooking. 7
- Skating. 6
- Providing transportation. 3
- Bowling. 2
- Swimming. 2

III. Do you think your son/daughter is benefiting from the alternate program?

Yes 65 (91%) No 1 (1%) No Response 5 (8%)

IV. What do you consider to be the relative strengths and weaknesses of the program? No Response 44 (62%)

Strengths

It provides a more varied program. 12
It teaches responsibility and initiative. 5
The French course broadens their education. 4

Weaknesses

(a) Dissatisfaction with the operation of the alternate program classes. 7

- More competition between students now than previously.
- There is too little homework.
- There is too much homework.
- There is too little emphasis on mathematics.
- There is too little discipline in these classes.
- The activities don't always interest the students.
- Students can waste a considerable amount of time.

(b) Concern for the operation of the program in general. 6

- It is too expensive.
- There is too little help and equipment.
- Volunteers sometimes have to leave before the school year is finished.
- More students should be included.
- Teachers don't have time to explain things to students.
- Parents lack confidence to teach a class.

(c) Disadvantages of a semester system. 4

- Length of exposure to a subject is too small.
- There are too few subjects at one time.

(d) Friction between regular program and alternate program students. 4

- Other students resent students on the alternate program.
- Students on the alternate program are separated from the rest of the school.
- Students are jealous of the 'high achievers'.
- Students on the regular program should have the options available to them, also.

V. Do you want your son/daughter to remain on the program?

Yes 66 (93%) No 1 No Response 4

What improvements should be made in the alternate program?

- Upgrade the facilities (more typewriters). 3
- Involve more students. 2
- Take more field trips. 2
- Make the options classes larger. 2
- Encourage more parent participation. 1
- Make the activities less expensive. 1
- Eliminate the semester system. 1
- Teach more subjects. 1
- Encourage different age groups to mingle and help each other. 1
- Encourage more group work. 1
- Give more homework so students could take another options class. 1
- Give more time to music and gym classes. 1
- Have different teachers for different subjects. 1